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ABSTRACT

This handbook is designed (1) to assist vocational educators and administrators in understanding both the causes of occupational sex segregation and the problems it creates; (2) to clarify the federal and state mandates for the elimination of sex bias in vocational education programs; and (3) to provide possible approaches and strategies that can be used by vocational education personnel to comply with legal requirements and contribute to the elimination of occupational sex segregation. The handbook's six chapters provide information on the nature of the problem; the laws applicable to vocational education programs; methods of identifying sex bias and creating institutional change; removing barriers to the pursuit of non-traditional education; the treatment of enrolled students; and general conclusions about sex-stereotyping and its elimination. (Sections on state laws apply specifically to California. A workshop manual, designed for use with the handbook, is available separately--CE 027 204.) (KC)

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ELIMINATING SEX BIAS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
A HANDBOOK FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

I. OVERVIEW

The designation of certain occupations as "male" and others as "female" is a phenomenon generally referred to as occupational sex segregation. It is the result of pervasive, yet untrue, assumptions about the abilities and job preferences of men and women. Among the many problems created by occupational sex segregation, three are particularly worth emphasizing. First, it causes women to be economically disadvantaged because of the substantial difference in the economic benefits that accompany "male jobs" and "female jobs." Second, it results in the limiting of occupational opportunities because men and women are discouraged, if not excluded, from pursuing careers that have not been traditionally designated as appropriate for their sex. Third, despite laws forbidding sex discrimination in education and employment, and a substantial increase of women into the labor market during the past ten years, an analysis of occupations and wages indicates that the world of work remains basically sex-segregated and unequal. The solution to continued occupational sex segregation and its discriminatory effects is complex and requires the commitment of educators, employers and unions.

The elimination of sex bias in vocational education and training programs is crucial to the development of a workforce where occupational opportunities are equally available to males and females — where the only limitations to the pursuit of a career are personal interest and competence. This Handbook is designed to:

(1) assist vocational educators and administrators in understanding both the causes of occupational sex segregation and the problems it creates;

(2) clarify the federal and state mandates for the elimination of sex bias in vocational education programs; and

(3) provide possible approaches and strategies that can be utilized by vocational education personnel to comply with legal requirements and contribute to the elimination of occupational sex segregation.

In attempting to accomplish these goals, this Handbook provides information on: the nature of the problem (Chapter I); the laws applicable to vocational education programs (Chapter II); methods of identifying sex bias and creating institutional change (Chapter III); removing barriers to the pursuit of non-traditional education (Chapter IV); and the treatment of enrolled students (Chapter V).

II. THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

The underlying problem is that occupational sex segregation results in a system of work and preparation for the world of work which, for a variety of reasons, discriminates against and arbitrarily imposes limitations on people on the basis of their sex. The problem becomes evident in employment statistics which demonstrate sex segregation by job category, wage differences between men and women, and sex imbalance in applications to and enrollment in vocational training and apprenticeship programs.

It is well documented and generally accepted that the problem begins with early conditioning — when boys and girls first learn to respond to different expectations and limitations. The assignment of women to helping and nurturing jobs and men to jobs that demand physical and mental effort has such strong historical roots that it has become ingrained in our culture. This, of course, results in a continuation of the problem and the consistent reinforcement of limitations through most aspects of our society — from individual attitudes to institutional policy. The need to eliminate sex discrimination in educational and employment opportunities has resulted from the recognition that previously imposed limits are inconsistent with the demands of our current society and that the underlying assumptions that have fostered occupational sex segregation are inaccurate.

III. MEN AND WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE

Statistics provided by the United States Department of Labor demonstrate that generally accepted assumptions about the labor force are dramatically inaccurate. For example:

1. *It is assumed that females do not need extensive occupational preparation because they will, in all likelihood, marry and be supported by their husbands.* However, according to Department of Labor data from 1976:

...46.8% of women 16 years and over were in the labor force
...45% of all married women whose husbands were present were in the labor force
...over 40% of all women in the workforce were either never married, divorced, separated or widowed.

2. *It is assumed that when women have children they will withdraw from the labor force.* However, according to Department of Labor data from 1976:

...14.9 million women with children under the age of eighteen were in the labor force, which accounts for 48% of all women with children under 18 years.

3. *It is assumed that, when women work, they do so for "supplemental income" and therefore do not have the same economic needs as men.* However, according to Department of Labor data from 1976:

...there were 13.6 million families headed by a woman and 54% of those women were in the labor force.

...23% of all working women are married to men whose income is below $10,000 annually.

4. *It is assumed that women have the same work opportunities as men if they are serious about working.* However:

...fully employed women continue to earn less than fully employed men. The 1975 Department of Labor statistics for annual income were:

white males	$13,216
minority males	10,168
white females	7,614
minority females	7,605

...20% of all families headed by a working woman had incomes below the poverty level.

5. *It is assumed that men will earn enough money to provide financially for a wife and children, and that their wives will not have to work.* However, according to 1974 Department of Labor statistics:

...37.7% of all men who were year-round, full-time workers earned less than $10,000 per year.

6. *It is assumed that all people are prepared for work equally and that any inequalities which emerge are caused by the attitudes and decisions of the woman herself or her employer.* However, according to an analysis of fifteen vocational education programs made in 1978 by the California State Department of Education, sex segregation begins with job training. From this analysis the following data emerged:

USOE #	PROGRAM TITLE	PERCENT OF MALES		PERCENT OF FEMALES	
		Secondary	C.C.*	Secondary	C.C.*
04.0600	Food Distrib.	27.8	35.1	72.2	64.9
04.0800	Gen. Merch.	27.0	63.1	73.0	36.8
07.0101	Dental Assist.	1.8	3.2	98.2	96.8
07.0303	Nursing Assist.	9.3	16.5	90.7	83.5
09.0101	Compre.Homemk.	17.0	13.3	83.0	86.7
09.0201	Care/Guid.Child	7.4	11.9	92.6	88.1
14.0303	Gen. Off. Clk.	19.4	40.1	80.6	59.9
14.0901	Clerk Typist	17.8	23.6	83.0	76.4
16.0104	Auto Tech.	99.3	91.1	.7	8.9
16.0108	Electr. Tech.	95.0	90.7	5.0	9.3
17.0302	Mechanics	95.0	93.2	5.0	6.8
17.0602	Cosmetology	8.2	16.2	91.8	83.8

*Community College

IV. THE EFFECTS OF SEX BIAS, STEREOTYPING AND DISCRIMINATION

The effects of sex discrimination, bias and stereotyping are dramatic for both the individual and society. Among the effects about which vocational educators must be particularly aware are:

1. Individual women and men are precluded from work in which they may have interest and aptitude if the particular type of job fails to fit into the sex-appropriate category.

2. By restricting women to lower paying jobs, a system of income differential is perpetuated which is based on group membership rather than on ability.

3. The limiting of job access diminishes the labor potential and productivity of women as a group. This is borne out in unemployment statistics which, in any year, are always higher for women than for men and always highest for minority women, who are consistently the least trained and have the most restricted access to jobs. Department of Labor statistics for 1974 serve as an example:

Official Unemployment Rate:	white male	7.2%
	white female	8.6%
	minority male	13.7%
	minority female	14.0%

4. Welfare dependency is perpetuated since lack of job opportunity, low wages and child care costs make employment a poor choice for many women heads of households.

Sex bias, stereotyping and discrimination result in: (1) reduction of available occupational opportunities; (2) loss of individual dignity; (3) subsistence income for many families with children which contributes to a continuation of the poverty cycle; and (4) loss of human resources to business and industry. Because the problem is pervasive and complex, its solution requires the commitment and cooperation of all sectors of our society.

V. THE ROLE OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Vocational educators have the ability to serve a major role in solving the problems of occupational sex segregation. Because of the unique nature of vocational education, as one of the major training grounds for job preparation, its faculty and staff:

(1) have the opportunity to influence the attitudes of potential workers, their families and, in many cases, their employers;

(2) have the opportunity to help both male and female students understand the realities of the work world and the need for skill development and job preparation for all people, regardless of their sex;

(3) have the opportunity to utilize their contact with potential workers, their understanding of the learning process and their knowledge of the work world to help students overcome traditional limitations on work choices, and to aid students in overcoming personal biases that might impose limitations on the people with whom the student may work in the future.

The task of ending sex bias in education and the work force is complex and demanding. However, the commitment of vocational educators to developing programs that address the problems created by sex bias is having an important and significant impact on student opportunities.

CHAPTER II

THE LEGAL REQUIREMENT TO ELIMINATE SEX BIAS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

I. INTRODUCTION

During the 1970s, the United States Congress, in response to an increased recognition of the pervasiveness of sex bias throughout this country's educational systems, passed legislation that forbids sex discrimination in education and that seeks to provide incentives for developing programs that will overcome the effects of historical sex bias in vocational education. The means by which the federal government enforces these laws is financial — those states or local educational programs that fail to comply with the law will either have their federal financial assistance terminated or will not be eligible for certain additional assistance.

There are two pieces of legislation with which vocational education administrators should be particularly familiar — Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the Vocational Education Act of 1963, as amended by Title II of the Education Amendments of 1976. Both laws are accompanied by an extensive set of regulations which explain and interpret the legislation. These regulations are issued by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, which is the federal agency designated to enforce both Title IX and Title II.

This Chapter will explain the provisions of both Title IX and Title II and the regulations that accompany them. It will also discuss the provisions of California's Five Year Plan that are relevant to the issue of sex bias in vocational education.

II. TITLE IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination in education. It States:

> No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

The federal regulation for the implementation of Title IX was issued by HEW in 1975. This regulation requires every school that receives federal funding to have a Title IX compliance officer, a published grievance procedure, a statement of non-discrimination in all recruitment materials and an evaluation of all policies and practices to make sure they comply with Title IX. The regulation also specifically prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in recruitment, admissions and treatment of students. If a school or college does engage in action that is determined to be discriminatory, they will be required to cease the discriminatory activity and take action to overcome the effects of past discrimination. The federal government may also terminate financial assistance. Furthermore, discrimination may subject the school or district to a private lawsuit.

III. TITLE II

A. Introduction

The Vocational Education Act of 1963 was amended by Title II of the Education Amendments of 1976 to include as one of its purposes the elimination of sex bias in vocational education. Title II includes the following statement of purpose:

> [T]o develop and carry out such programs of vocational education with each state so as to overcome sex discrimination and sex stereotyping in vocational education programs (including programs of homemaking), and thereby furnish equal education opportunities in vocational education to persons of both sexes....

All references to Title II in this handbook refer to the Vocational Education Act and its 1976 amendments. Title II approaches the problems of sex discrimination from a different perspective than Title IX. Whereas Title IX prohibits discrimination, Title II mandates certain affirmative steps designed to establish sex equity in vocational programs.

Title II establishes administrative procedures, priorities, and funding for positive efforts to overcome sex bias, sex discrimination and sex stereotyping in vocational education programs.† Under Title II as it is currently administered, a single block grant†† is available to each state, on a matching grant basis, for distribution to local educational agencies or private groups for vocational education programs. Eighty percent of the block grant is considered a "basic grant" and twenty percent is for "program improvement and supportive services."

Most of the provisions of Title II and its regulations are directed to vocational education programs at the state level. Local programs, however, are affected indirectly by the priorities and procedures established by the state both to render it eligible for the federal money and to distribute the money to local vocational education programs.

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† Sex bias is behavior resulting from the assumption that one sex is superior to the other.
Sex stereotyping is attributing behaviors, abilities, interests, values and roles of a person on the basis of that person's sex. Sex discrimination is any action which limits or denies a person or a group of persons opportunities, privileges, roles or rewards on the basis of sex.
The term sex bias, as used in this Handbook, includes sex discrimination and sex stereotyping.

†† Grants for consumer and homemaking education and special programs for disadvantaged students are administered separately.

The remainder of this section describes the provisions of Title II and its implementing regulation that are specifically related to overcoming sex discrimination and sex stereotyping in vocational education and of which local vocational education administrators should be aware.

B. Five Year Plans and Annual Plans

In order to receive federal monies under Title II, a state must develop and submit a Five Year Plan for vocational education. This Plan must include a description of the policies and procedures the state will implement to assure equal access to vocational education by women and men, including descriptions of:

(1) actions the state will take to overcome sex discrimination and stereotyping in state and local vocational education programs;

(2) incentives by the state to encourage enrollment of students in courses which are non-traditional for their sex;

(3) incentives by the state to develop model programs to reduce sex stereotyping in training for and placement in all occupations.

The Five Year Plan must also set forth a program to assess and meet the needs of displaced homemakers, single heads of households, homemakers who work part-time and wish to secure full-time work, and women and men in jobs traditional for their sex who now wish to seek employment in non-traditional jobs, including special courses in how to seek employment and placement services.

C. Personnel

Each state must designate some full-time staff to assist in eliminating sex bias and stereotyping in vocational education programs. The duties of the person(s) so designated are directed to eliminating sex bias and stereotyping and include assisting local education agencies in improving vocational education opportunities for women.

D. Advisory Councils

Each state must have a Vocational Education Advisory Council that includes among its members women with experience in employment and training programs and with knowledge about problems of sex discrimination in job training and employment, including minority women who have special knowledge of the problems of discrimination in job training and employment against women in minority groups.

Local education agencies are also required to have an advisory council that includes representation of both sexes and of racial and ethnic minorities.

E. Evaluation of Vocational Education Programs

Each vocational education program or project that receives public support must be evaluated by the state during the time when the Five Year Plan is in effect. The services provided to women is one of the items designated for evaluation.

F. Use of Federal Vocational Education Funds

As mentioned above, of the total grant made to each state under Title II, 80% is designated a "basic grant" and 20% is designated for "program improvement and supportive services."

One of the things the state *must* do with "basic grant" monies is provide support programs for: (1) displaced homemakers; (2) single heads of household who lack adequate job skills; and (3) people who are in jobs traditional for their sex and want to enter jobs that have been considered non-traditional for their sex. In addition to these programs, the state may use some of its "basic grant" money for support services for women entering training programs for jobs that have traditionally been limited to men and for child care services.

With "program improvement and supportive services funds," each state also has the discretion to use money for: (1) research, programs and projects directed toward overcoming sex bias and sex stereotyping in vocational education, and (2) training programs for vocational education personnel and guidance and counseling personnel to assist them in overcoming sex bias in vocational education programs.

IV. CALIFORNIA FIVE YEAR PLAN

The California Five Year State Plan for Vocational Education is an extensive document that describes the policies, planning activities, goals, funding priorities and allocation procedures for the State in the area of vocational education for the years 1977—1982. The Plan, in its statements of philosophy and policy, expresses a commitment to equal opportunity for all students regardless of race, national origin, sex, age, economic status or handicapped condition. Three statements of policy are particularly relevant to this Handbook:

1. *Sex bias, sex discrimination, and sex stereotyping* — Vocational education programs shall be developed so as to overcome sex bias, sex discrimination, and sex stereotyping in all aspects of activities. No person shall be denied the opportunity to pursue training in a given field nor discouraged from doing so because of his or her sex.

2. *Vocational education for the handicapped* — Vocational education programs shall be developed for handicapped persons. Such programs and related activities will be planned and coordinated in conformity with and as a part of each handicapped person's individualized educational program as required by the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975.

3. *Vocational education for the disadvantaged* — Vocational education programs and services will be developed and funded from local, state, and federal funds to serve disadvantaged students, including limited-English-speaking and non-English-speaking persons, as defined in the Education Amendments of 1976.

A. Allocation of Title II Funds by the State of California

California receives a block grant from the federal government pursuant to Subparts 2 (80% of the grant) and 3 (20% of the grant) of Title II. The State, in turn, distributes funds to local school districts and community colleges in accordance with the provisions of Title II, the California Five Year Plan and priorities established by the Joint Committee on Vocational Education.

Subpart 2 monies are available to LEA's and community colleges according to a formula set out in the Five Year Plan and certain established priorities. These funds are available for certain specified vocational education programs and services, one of which is the elimination of sex stereotyping and sex bias.

A portion of California's Subpart 3 monies is distributed to certain eligible districts on an allocation basis for guidance, personnel training and programs to overcome sex bias. The remainder of the Subpart 3 monies is utilized on the State level or distributed by the State as grants for research, curriculum development and exemplary programs.

B. Specific Provisions on Sex Bias and Sex Stereotyping

In compliance with the requirements of Title II, the California Five Year Plan identifies specific activities that will be undertaken to overcome sex bias and sex stereotyping in vocational education programs and services. The Five Year Plan specifies nineteen objectives that are designed to meet the goals of providing equal access and treatment regardless of sex in both educational and employment opportunities.

The plan identifies specific activities that will be undertaken in order to eliminate sex bias in vocational education programs. These activities cover a range of areas including the development of: (1) in-service staff training; (2) resource groups and materials; (3) curriculum materials; (4) guidance and counseling techniques; (5) technical assistance to LEA's (6) support services for women; and (7) placement programs.

The Plan identifies a number of tasks for State personnel that should result in valuable information, materials and technical assistance being available to local programs. Once local personnel have identified the needs of their program, the State Plan should be reviewed. Such a review will assist local personnel in contacting resources that have developed materials or programs that can be used in local programs.

CHAPTER III

OVERVIEW ON CREATING INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE TO OVERCOME SEX BIAS

I. INTRODUCTION

The diversity of opinion in our society as to what constitutes appropriate gender behavior and career choices for males and females has probably never been as great as it is now. For educators, who daily confront the task of preparing young people for productive adulthood, the result is often confusion and conflict. Vocational educators find themselves in the midst of contradictory pressures regarding both their own role as educators and the obligations of their educational programs. The sources of such pressures include (1) staff, programs and materials that support traditional gender-based training categories; (2) federal and state government requirements that link funding to a school's efforts to eliminate sex bias and sex discrimination; (3) what employment opportunities are available; and (4) the various demands of staff, students, parents, trade unions and industry.

Despite these contradictory pressures many vocational education professionals have committed themselves to eliminating sex bias in vocational education. The interrelationship of (1) the legal obligations encountered, (2) the inherent responsibility to provide equal educational opportunity to all students regardless of sex, and (3) the necessity of opening training opportunities as a precursor to providing true alternatives in the employment market, place vocational educators in a unique leadership role. Because the attitudes and assumptions that have fostered sex segregation have become so ingrained in the education system, vocational educators are being placed in the position of accepting responsibility for institutional change.

II. UNDERSTANDING CHANGE IN AN INSTITUTIONAL SETTING

Instituting a successful program of change from what has existed in the past and currently exists to what is desired for the future involves careful planning. The process of planning and organizing for change involves three interrelated considerations: (1) understanding how change can be focused and the steps necessary to any positive change effort; (2) setting goals and objectives; and (3) developing strategies and methods of implementation.

A. General Principles of Change

Many efforts to create change in organizations and institutions are strikingly unsuccessful. This is, in part, the result of overly simplistic views about how change can be accomplished. Seldom is the passage of a law, the order of a supervisor, or the reasoning of one or more individuals sufficient to create positive or lasting change

within any organizational structure. A successful change strategy requires advance planning that incorporates an analysis of organizational structure, historical development and people who are involved in the organization.

The first step in developing a strategy is to identify the focus of the change that is desired. The focus of change may be any or all of the following:

1. *Intrapersonal*: Within this focus an individual or a group of people individually are identified as the focus of change. We may identify female or male students, or faculty who need to change some of the attitudes they have internalized as a result of traditional sex role conditioning. We may identify behaviors or skills which female or male students or faculty need to learn. We may identify additional information which any of these individuals needs to acquire. In each case, however, we are talking about individuals changing in some way which allows them to function more comfortably within the new goals.

2. *Interpersonal*: Here the focus is on the types of interactions which occur between people. Those concerned with working to eliminate sex bias in education have identified interactions between faculty and students; between parents and faculty; between students and job supervisors; between employers and faculty; between counselors and students; and between students and students as some of the relevant interpersonal areas.

3. *Structural*: A focus on structural change looks at how a program or school is organized and arranged to teach vocational education. It includes staffing patterns, recruitment for courses, titles and content of courses, procedures and policies, student placement, and the informal agreements on "how things work around here."

While it is true that the complete elimination of sex bias within our educational system suggests that all three of these areas are necessary foci for change, in order to be able to plan change in some sort of coherent and lasting way, priorities need to be set and a strategy must be developed. This is not as discouraging as it sounds, however. What individuals think, feel and know affects and is affected by how people interact with each other. Both are influenced by and can influence the structure of the system. Therefore, to the extent that there is success in producing change in any of these areas, other areas will automatically be affected.

Each of the three areas of change identified above involves and affects individuals. Even something as seemingly objective as the development of course content depends, for its success, on people being willing to direct students to the course, people being willing to approve the addition of the course to the curriculum, and students being willing to enroll in the course. Change necessarily requires that individuals do things differently than they have done them in the past. For that reason, it is probable that any attempt at change will encounter resistance from some people. Understanding the basis for such resistance and incorporating certain strategies into a change plan can help those in planning positions avoid inadvertently increasing the resistance to the proposed change.

B. The Process Necessary for Successful Change

The *successful* implementation of new ideas in an institutional setting follows four progressive stages. First, a need for change must be identified and expressed. The next step in the process is to establish an environment that supports the desired changes. Once support is established, changes should gradually be implemented with time provided for people to experience the change. The final stage involves providing the opportunity for people to evaluate the new program or procedure and to integrate it into their everyday work. The following discussion describes these stages in more detail.

1. Recognizing a Need for Change

In order for change to begin, someone (but not everyone) must experience a state of imbalance. That is, someone must want something to be different, for whatever reason, than it presently is. Without this condition, of course, there would be no impetus for change. The desire for a change within vocational education to reduce sex bias may come from female students, male students, administrators, faculty, professional associations, or the State Board of Education. Once a need for change is expressed, other people and groups are placed in the position of needing to respond. This can be a confusing period of time because those people or groups who have not experienced the need for change themselves will be going through the process of developing a response to the demands being made. If the expressed need for change is to reach a resolution, as opposed to evolving into conflict, efforts during this initial period should be aimed at communication and information sharing.

2. Creation of Support

The individuals or group initiating the change must take action early in the process to create support for themselves and to remove existing barriers to planning and progress. When this step is by-passed, one of two outcomes is likely to occur — those desiring change either become discouraged and withdraw from the process or they become angry and ineffective. When the latter occurs, the degree of threat for those who did not initiate the change is likely to increase and the result is conflict instead of resolution.

Requiring people to change their attitudes or the way they work tends to create some anxiety. Therefore, part of the planning during this step should seek to develop ways to help those affected by the change discover potential benefits and explore the anticipated negative consequences. Wherever possible, those seeking change should try to reduce the negative experiences that some people will have as a result of the change.

3. Implementing and Experiencing Change

As changes are actually implemented, time should be allowed for experiencing the new policy or program before evaluation and further changes occur. This "breathtaking period" allows for a number of important things to happen. First, it provides the opportunity for the people involved to have direct exposure to the new policy or program which in turn provides a reality base for future planning and discussion. It also gives people a chance to separate out those fears and/or hopes that were based more on speculation than on reality. Second, a period of adjustment allows for the identification of success which can increase both hope and self-esteem. Finally, during such a period of time, leadership may emerge which can provide models for functioning within the new policy or program for both students and staff.

4. Integrating

An important step in developing a process of change involves planning and implementing ways in which the change becomes part of the on-going structure of the organization. Participants in the system need the opportunity to explore what these changes mean to their relationships and work within the organization. This period of integration hopefully results in participants incorporating and accepting the new policies or programs into their everyday work within the structure. Unless this occurs, the implemented changes will not have the desired effect nor will participants be willing to consider additional changes.

C. Steps for Development of a Plan for Change

Successful change is not possible without the development of a successful, yet flexible, plan. The following steps are suggested as a guideline for the development of such a plan by those who wish to initiate, develop and implement a strategy for overcoming sex bias in vocational education.

1. Step One: Goals and Priorities

The process of setting goals and identifying priorities necessarily involves two interrelated tasks — first, what dissatisfaction exists with the current program, and second, what future is envisioned. For example, the future envisioned may be a vocational education program where every department has an equal representation of male and female students. The dissatisfaction being expressed may concern an area that is general to all departments such as recruitment of female students; it may be focused on only one department such as trades and industry; or it may be as specific as the treatment of female students in agricultural programs.

2. Step Two: Identify Support and Opposition

Once goals and priorities are identified, the next logical step is to study the structure, personnel and procedures of the organization that will be affected by the change. This will enable planners to identify where support and opposition will emerge and what resources will be available for the implementation of proposed changes. No change can be realistically planned without concrete knowledge of the school system being affected.

3. Step Three: Develop Strategies and Action Plans

After goals and priorities have been set and information has been gathered about the institution, strategies and action plans can be developed. Alternative strategies and plans should be identified to allow for the greatest amount of flexibility. In evaluating the various alternatives, planners should consider both a cost-benefit analysis and an analysis of the time required to implement the plan.

The plan chosen should take into account the principles discussed in the previous section on types of change and steps necessary to minimize resistance to change. It should also take into account what has been shown to be successful in other situations. Because of the recent availability of federal funding for dealing with sex discrimination in education, many different projects have been tried throughout the country and information about their success rates is available. Some of these programs are mentioned throughout this Handbook.

The development of strategies and action plans can be very tedious and cumbersome. However, a thorough job at this stage is the greatest guarantee of ultimate success.

4. Step Four: Implementation and Evaluation

As was mentioned in the previous section, people must be given the opportunity to experience and integrate change in stages. For that reason, the actual implementation of the planning groups' action steps will be somewhat gradual depending on the community's responses to the changes as they take place. Therefore, the implementation stage requires flexibility on the part of the planning groups and constant evaluation of the effect various changes have generated.

CHAPTER IV

REMOVING BARRIERS TO NON-TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

I. UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM

An examination of enrollment figures in most vocational education programs will reveal patterns of enrollment that are gender-linked. The overwhelming majority of students enrolled in agriculture, technical and trade programs are male. Female students constitute the vast majority of enrollees in office, health and home economics programs. Needless to say, these patterns of enrollment imbalance tend to occur in the training for jobs which are traditionally seen as more appropriate for one sex than for the other.

With the use of enrollment data, it is relatively easy to identify which programs present recruitment and admissions problems related to sex bias and sex discrimination. The more difficult task, currently confronted by vocational education administrators, is how to develop creative programs that are more open and sex-balanced.

Crucial to the development of a sound strategy for change is an understanding of why sex bias and discrimination continue to have a strong impact on admissions to vocational education programs. The two major areas where resistance to change occurs and where the existence of discrimination is identifiable are (1) *internalized* barriers and (2) *institutional* barriers. Although different in nature, both types of barriers operate interdependently to reinforce each other. Neither the laws which protect against sex discrimination nor the good intentions of vocational education administrators will significantly change the number of people who apply for admission in non-traditional areas of study unless both internalized and institutional barriers are understood and confronted.

A. Internalized Barriers

Internalized barriers are those attitudes, beliefs and expectations which are taught and consistently reinforced about what is appropriate male and female behavior. As a result of these beliefs, individuals limit their own thinking and behavior in order to conform. People have been taught, for example, that jobs involving manual labor are inappropriate for females because women lack strength and stamina, and are unable to understand tools and machinery. Physical labor is inconsistent with what people have learned to identify as "feminine." When girls and women begin to accept this kind of limitation on their own individual abilities and choices, an internalized barrier is created. Even if a female student does not totally accept this belief for herself, she is likely to think that others do and that she will be judged "unfeminine" if she enrolls in a non traditional course of study. This internalized belief is reinforced by the fact that others in the society, both male and female, have been taught the same traditional behavior patterns and often will reject those who break tradition.

The process of internalization is the same for both males and females who seek training or entry into non-traditional occupations. It applies to men interested in nursing as well as to women interested in welding. To the extent that traditional behavior is believed to be appropriate, self and peer group limiting will occur. It occurs either because new behavior will be punished through ridicule or rejection or because the limits are so ingrained that new behavior is never considered as an alternative.

B. Institutional Barriers

The results of discrimination are evident in the way our institutions are organized and structured. Institutionalized barriers are the second major area of resistance to creating the change necessary to the development of sex equity in vocational education. Most vocational education programs were developed at a time when the needs of our society and presumptions about the abilities and interests of men and women were different than they are now. Successful organizations, once established, tend to change more slowly and cautiously than the society they serve. The result is that many of the policies, procedures and structures that are part of vocational education programs tend to support the past rather than the present and the future.

Common to vocational education are: (1) catalogs which are written in a manner that supports sex stereotypes; (2) textbooks and training materials which imply or state that certain jobs are "male only" or "female only;" (3) class locations and physical facilities which are designed to consider the needs of one sex or the other, but not both; and (4) staff patterns that reinforce the belief that certain types of work are more appropriate for one sex or the other.

It is impossible to have a vocational education program that equally trains males and females in all occupational areas when disproportionate numbers are recruited and admitted. It is essential, therefore, to develop plans which take into account the nature of internalized and institutional barriers and whose primary goal is the removal or weakening of such barriers.

II. ACTION STEPS FOR REMOVING INTERNALIZED BARRIERS

Since internalized barriers block awareness of occupational alternatives and discourage the choice of non-traditional alternatives where such awareness exists, a plan for change needs to incorporate action steps which focus on these two dynamics. Developing an awareness of the possibilities and an acceptance of the appropriateness of new work options are the objectives needed for changing internalized barriers. Individual students need to know the variety of job options available and that those options constitute realistic goals irrespective of the student's gender. In order to meet these objectives, vocational education programs need to communicate information and encourage students to consider non-traditional choices. The following discussion identifies areas that should be incorporated into

educational programs. Items A-C concern the various aspects of communicating necessary information. Items D-F encompass the process of attitudinal change necessary to enable students to choose non-traditional training programs.

A. Education Regarding the Realities of the Work World

Most secondary, and many post-secondary students are unaware of the economic and social realities of the role of women in contemporary society. Young women continue to plan their studies and futures on the basis of the myth that women marry, raise families, and will be financially supported by their husbands. Young men continue to believe they do not need to learn much about children or homemaking since these aspects of their adult lives will be handled by their wives. They also continue to believe that they will be financially able to support their families without the necessity of their wives working. A further assumption that contributes to limiting occupational plans is that if women do work it is only for extra spending money and, therefore, it is not important that they train for higher paying jobs. The factual material included in Chapter I of this Handbook needs to become part of the teaching curriculum of every vocational education program so that life-decisions made by students will be based on fact and not on fantasy.

B. Education Regarding Non-Traditional Job Possibilities

In order for students to begin to consider non-traditional jobs, they need to know that those opportunities exist and that members of their sex are no longer excluded. Obviously, an announcement that such opportunities are available is insufficient. Because of prior exposure and encouragement, males have a familiarity with what is involved in certain types of male-intensive work areas that females lack, and vice versa. Therefore, an important part of the educational task is to provide information regarding the content and opportunities of various kinds of jobs. This type of information is an essential basis upon which to make logical decisions and choices. Such information should be provided through a variety of media including: formal lessons; informal discussions; field trips to job sities; films; career counseling and meetings with people involved in the workforce.

C. Education Regarding Vocational Training Opportunities

Once students become aware of non-traditional job opportunities, it is important that they also understand what training is necessary to enter the field, who provides the training, how long it takes, and what can be expected in terms of placement and advancement after the completion of a training program.

D. Communicating the Appropriateness of Non-Traditional Work

With the use of every possible form of communication, from personal conversation to the generalized media, young people have absorbed the message that a male-female division of jobs is "normal" and "right." If the attitude that has been created is to be changed, the first step is evaluating communication patterns. For example, educators must examine their verbal patterns and become conscious of the

ways in which language conveys an attitude. The constant repetition of phrases such as "the plumber, (he)" and "the nurse, (she)" communicates a message to students about the appropriateness of certain jobs.

A successful strategy for change needs to examine all forms of communication, including the verbal and pictorial communications involved in course descriptions, bulletin boards, teaching materials, lectures and general conversation. Most people may not intend to imply exclusion by the use of traditional forms such as the universal "he," but tradition is so strong that exclusion is readily heard. A conscious change in communication patterns is necessary to achieve re-education and attitude change.

E. Providing Models

Perhaps the strongest influence in the learning process occurs by virtue of available role models. Career choices and perceptions about appropriate behavior are often the result of exposure, that is, experiencing other people who are respected and are making similar choices. It is important to examine the possibility of providing career models who are working in non-traditional jobs. Among the various alternatives available to vocational education administrators are: including on the faculty men and women who are working in non-traditional jobs; bringing such people into the educational setting as guests; and providing field trips where students observe such people in an occupational setting.

F. Providing Support

Any student who chooses to enter a course of study that is traditionally viewed as inappropriate for persons of her/his sex will probably find little support for this choice among peers or family. The staff of vocational education programs need to be prepared to support students in this position. Equally important are efforts by the staff to inform and educate parents in such a way as to enable them to be more supportive.

The role of the vocational education staff in removing internalized barriers is an advocacy role. In developing strategies to overcome the internalized barriers discussed above, it is sometimes helpful to view recruitment as an effort to encourage students to make career choices from a broader range of alternatives than those that have been traditionally available.

III. ACTION STEPS FOR REMOVING INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Some institutional barriers involve policies and procedures while others occur through the organizational structure of a school or vocational education program. The policies and procedures are much clearer and easier to change. They involve *stopping* the following practices:

1. The setting of limitations or quotas on the number or proportion of persons of one sex who may be admitted to any program or course;

2. Ranking of applicants separately by sex;

3. Using tests or other criteria for admission which adversely affect any person on the basis of sex;

4. Establishing distinctions or applying rules concerning admissions because of parental, family or marital status of students or because of pregnancy or related conditions;

5. Asking an applicant's marital status.

Identifying the discriminatory impact of an organizational structure is more difficult. Much of the difficulty is related to the fact that organizational structures have developed over a long period of time and have been based on traditional assumptions about appropriate occupational choices for both men and women. Any successful strategy for change must include an analysis of the following elements of a program's organizational structure:

A. Staffing Patterns

Every educator is aware of the ineffectiveness of trying to teach one thing while its opposite is consistently demonstrated in the learning environment. As vocational educators begin to communicate the principle that all areas of work are acceptable and available to interested students, regardless of their sex, there emerges the need to demonstrate an institutional belief and commitment consistent with the communication. To do otherwise conveys the message that the school does not believe enough in the principle to practice it. Therefore, the staffing pattern of any vocational education program should not reflect traditional stereotypes of sex-based occupational choices.

B. Job Counseling

Traditionally, job counselors have both devoted more time and provided more challenges and options to males than to females. Job counseling is not limited to the services provided by counselors within the student services department. It also occurs through work fairs, assembly programs, bulletin boards, testing programs, visiting lecturers and teacher contact. Remedying the effects of past discrimination requires a critical analysis of current counseling procedures and the development of new and expanded procedures which reflect an equal concern for female competence and the availability of occupational choice regardless of sex.

C. Advertising

Educators tend to think in terms of "offering" courses as opposed to "advertising" courses. In most schools, courses are offered to a group of students who

are part of an on-going system and, therefore, know about the availability of courses through some established channel. Such channels generally represent a structure which was developed years ago and has become part of the current system. Such systems are usually ineffective in reaching any new group of students. Furthermore, the way course offerings are presented may affect the choices of those students who are familiar with the system. For example, male students will never read the course descriptions listed under a category entitled "health care" or "home economics" because of preconceived ideas of who should enroll or what the content of such courses will include.

D. Location and Scheduling

Failure to provide flexible scheduling is often a problem for women who are in need of job training but are also involved with family commitments, especially with young children. Such inflexible training schedules can mean these women must delay job training until their children are older. Classes are often held in locations that have been identified in a community as "male" space or "female" space. Location and scheduling need to be examined by vocational education staff to determine their impact on student participation and to identify changes that would contribute to the program's goals. Often it will be essential to seek the advice of people outside the staff in order to get an unbiased opinion.

E. Financial and Child Care Needs

One of the assumptions upon which vocational education programs were developed and organized was that a male should receive job training early in life, while still financially dependent on his parents, so that he could then become the wage earner for his own family. For those males who did not fit the pattern, a variety of options developed to provide them with money while they received skill training. Although many females are also in the position of wage earner, or have young children to support, the system has not developed to accommodate their financial needs. For example, it is possible to become an apprentice barber (a male-intensive job) and receive a salary while learning, but in order to become a beautician (a female-intensive job) an individual must pay for the training.

A vocational education system that seeks to provide equal educational opportunities for males and females must examine organizational discrepancies that affect the financial abilities of men and women to gain the skills necessary for economic independence. In undertaking such an evaluation, the realities of our culture — such as placing the primary responsibility for child-rearing on women — must be taken into account. Vocational education personnel can increase the participation of women in their programs by means of the provision of child care services and strong publicity on financial assistance available through government or school programs.

F. Awareness of Target Audiences

Many vocational education departments or schools are organized to meet the needs of those who have been the traditional students. In attempting to expand, it

has been easy to assume mistakenly that new groups of students would be quite similar to the old group. As a result, many groups of women in need of vocational education have been overlooked. Included within this group are minority women, non-English speaking women, handicapped women, formerly or presently incarcerated women, and older women, including displaced homemakers.

Each of the factors identified as internalized or institutional barriers must be evaluated with a view toward its intensified impact on these groups of women.

IV. INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INSTITUTIONAL AND INTERNALIZED BARRIERS

Vocational educators must be aware of the interrelationship between internalized and institutional barriers. For most students, the internalized assumptions and beliefs regarding occupational choice have been constantly reinforced by the structure of educational institutions. One of the most common inhibitors of change is the adoption of the attitude, either personally or institutionally, that it is enough to abolish rules that limit admission to training programs on the basis of sex. An extension of this attitude has been that, if women want to make it in a man's field, they must act like men or adopt a tough exterior. This position demands that the individual change and it ignores the reality that a student embarking on a nontraditional career is constantly combatting stereotypes and criticism. The institutions's role must be positive.

V. SOME SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS

In developing strategies for overcoming sex bias, stereotypes and discrimination, vocational education administrators should consider utilizing the following program ideas (which have proved successful where implemented):

A. Developing classroom or assembly presentations, including: games on sex stereotyping; studies on women preparing for their future; and women in the workforce. 1/

1/ Developed by Project E.V.E. A detailed workbook on their recruitment techniques is available for $7.00. Order *Equal Vocational Education Manual,* by Bergstrom and Champagne, from: Institute of Labor & Industrial Relations, University of Houston, Houston, Texas 77004.

B. Inviting junior high school students to visit vocational education classrooms, meet teachers and talk with students pursuing non-traditional training. 2/

C. Requiring 9th grade students to participate in an introductory vocational education course, including direct exposure to and initial experience in a variety of vocations. 3/

D. Holding orientation meetings with parents. 4/

E. Developing frequent contact with industry. 5/

F. Developing a course or program which matches students with people working in non-traditional careers, where students can spend 3-6 hours in the field. Include conferences with students and community groups. 6/

G. Developing grant proposals to provide financial assistance that will enable schools to recruit, train and assist women in qualifying as vocational education instructors in the *trades*. 7/

2/ *Id.*

3/ Developed with excellent results at Eli Whitney High, contact: Nathan Mayron, Principal, Eli Whitney Vocational High School, 257 N. 6th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11211.

4/ *Id.*

5/ *Id.*

6/ Contact: Heather Alberts, Project Director, New Frontiers, Pima County Developmental Career Guidance Project, 545 North Camino Seco, Tucson, Arizona 85710.

7/ Contact: Sue Cobble, Women Instructors in the Trades, San Jose City College, 2100 Moorpark Avenue, San Jose, California 95128.

CHAPTER V

TREATMENT OF NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS

The goal of providing sex equity is not met with the enrollment of students in courses or programs non-traditional for their sex. The complaint is often voiced that students enrolled in non-traditional programs withdraw before the course is completed. The placement of responsibility for failure on the non-traditional student ignores the existence of attitudes and policies which make it more difficult for some people to achieve success in a particular program because of their sex. There are many factors that can contribute to sex bias in achievement and result in a higher than average drop-out rate for students in non-traditional programs. In order to meet the educational challenge of increasing the number of students who complete training in non-traditional occupations, these factors must be evaluated in the context of each vocational program and appropriate action considered.

I. INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS

Many of the institutional barriers to sex equity in admissions and recruitment that were discussed in Chapter 4 are also relevant to the treatment of students enrolled in non-traditional training programs. Sex bias, even where subtle — in course descriptions, textbooks and training material, physical facilities and staff patterns — can contribute to an atmosphere of discouragement with respect to both enrollment and continuation in non-traditional educational programs.

A subtle message of being inappropriate and incompetent is often communicated to students who enter a vocational education program that is atypical for their sex. The following areas should be reviewed for both direct and indirect sex bias:

1. Course titles;
2. Course pre-requisites;
3. Course descriptions;
4. Curriculum materials;
5. Class location and facilities;
6. Class time;
7. Classroom activities;
8. Staffing and role models;
9. Presence of other students of the same sex;
10. Access to student work programs.

The existence of sex bias in these aspects of a vocational education program operates to discourage achievement and success.

Several actions are possible to counter the type of institutional pressure described above. In constructing a plan to overcome institutional barriers to achievement in non-traditional programs, vocational educators should consider the following:

A. Development of Support Programs for Non-Traditional Students

A solitary female in a non-traditional class is automatically subjected to increased pressure and more likely to be treated in traditional stereotyped ways. Therefore, it is important to eliminate tokenism, provide a structure for peer support, and train and organize staff to give support.

B. Institute Procedures for Changing Curriculum Materials

Educators must recognize that curriculum materials will not be rewritten overnight to eliminate sex bias, and communicate with students about traditional views represented by the materials with support and leadership for alternative views. More recently available materials should be reviewed to see if they provide representation of people training for and engaged in non-traditional work. If so, they should be used to replace old materials as quickly as possible.

C. Incorporate Activities into the Program That Will Support Non-Traditional Students

Field trips, speakers and films are a few of the many teaching techniques available that can be utilized to demonstrate the opportunities and successes of people engaged in employment that is non-traditional for their sex.

D. Improve the Presence of Role Models within the Institution

The presence of skilled men and women on the faculty who are succeeding in non-traditional jobs provides a strong message to all students that competence is more important than gender. The authority structure of the school and the assignment of staff along traditional lines all serve to teach and reinforce traditional roles and also the assumptions that male-identified jobs are accorded a higher status. Women should be involved on an equal basis with men in every stage of vocational education from student recruitment to career counseling to job placement and follow-up.

E. Evaluate the Course Requirements and Pre-requisites

Educators should review the ways in which training programs are sequenced and determine if there is sex bias and if so, whether the sequence is really necessary or can be adjusted. Also, procedures or programs should be developed to provide additional assistance for those students who have not had, because of their sex, the opportunity or encouragement to take courses or develop skills that might be considered legitimate pre-requisites.

II. TREATMENT BY FACULTY

Teachers, like most adults, tend to subscribe to traditional views of appropriate behavior for male and female students. Not only are different behaviors

expected of students depending on their sex, they are actually responded to and rewarded on the basis of stereotyped appropriateness. For example, dependence and weakness are expected and reinforced in female students and punished in male students, while independence and strength are expected and reinforced in male students and punished in female students. Because social behavior is learned, in part, as a response to how a person is treated by others, teacher responses can play a major role in reinforcing stereotypes and discouraging achievement in non-traditional educational programs.

Discouragement by faculty can be overt and direct, e.g., a statement by a carpentry instructor that he does not like girls in his class; it can be clear but indirect, e.g., assigning a female student to a task that is less demanding than those assigned to male students, with the implication that she cannot handle the more difficult jobs; it can be subtle and almost unidentifiable, e.g., failure to praise good work that is traditionally seen as appropriate for the other sex. Whatever form it takes, it can be damaging to the student and can contribute to a decision not to pursue the program.

There are steps vocational education administrators can take to deal with faculty bias against non-traditional training. The following alternatives should be considered in designing any plan to overcome sex bias in vocational education.

1. Staff should be informed about the law.

2. Like students, faculty need realistic, factual information about the current realities of women in the workforce and the capabilities of women workers.

3. Programs should be devised that will assist faculty in identifying both the particular biases and stereotypes they have internalized and the ways in which they behave that are discriminatory.

Relearning may happen through a variety of ways, e.g., written materials, interacting with people who have developed expertise in areas non-traditional to their sex, and structured training programs.

III. TREATMENT BY GUIDANCE COUNSELSORS

Guidance counselors often have a significant impact on students in terms of both career choice and course selection. Those counselors who hold traditional views of appropriate male and female behavior are likely to incorporate these views into the advising process. If students are not encouraged to consider non-traditional course and program alternatives, sex-segregated training programs will be perpetuated. In addition to being exposed to the same programs and materials that are presented to faculty, counselors should be encouraged to examine their own special role and the materials they use within their counseling program, such as aptitude and interest tests.

IV. TREATMENT BY PEERS

Peer pressure can have as negative an impact on student achievement as can a lack of teacher support. Teenagers are especially subject to the effects of peer pressure. Two very crucial developmental tasks confront people during their teen years. First, it is generally the time when young people are beginning to view themselves as adults and to make decisions about their future work roles. Second, it is also a time of preoccupation with how they interact with and are viewed by other people, especially people of the opposite sex. When young people choose a training program or career that is not viewed as traditionally appropriate, they often find their decision creates tension in their relationships with other people. Young men may find themselves threatened by female invasion into previously all-male territory, which in turn may result in aggressive behavior and/or outright rejection. A young man who enters a female-identified area may find that female students treat him in a condescending manner. These students may also encounter stigma from other students of their own sex and often find themselves ignored socially.

For older students, there is often less psychological need for direct approval from other students. However, learning in an atmosphere of hostility because of one's sex is an undesirable added pressure for any student. Bias, stereotyping and discrimination are obviously not restricted to treatment by peers within the training program. Women steelworkers who have recently broken into jobs within a traditional male area report various types of harassment on the job, including: being required by foremen to carry excessive weights which male co-workers utilize tractors to carry; being denied breaks; being assigned the duties of two jobs simultaneously and being excluded from teaching sessions of safety precautions held for new male employees.

There is a need for all students to receive both teaching and support directed toward accepting and responding to changing sex role behavior in constructive ways. A more accepting and positive attitude from one's peers can contribute greatly to concentration and success in skills training. Such programs should also incorporate information on what kind of treatment non-traditional students can expect in the work world and effective ways to cope with harassment and discouragement.

An effective program will benefit all students. It will assist non-traditional students in coping with negative responses. It will hopefully also have an important impact on the traditional student in terms of his/her ability to respect differences and deal positively with events that might occur in his/her personal job life.

Programs and strategies directed toward improving student attitudes and peer support should be incorporated into three areas: curriculum, teacher support and special programs.

V. SUMMARY

Statistics on the number of male and female students entering and completing vocational training programs should be monitored periodically. Where there is a discrepancy between the percentage of males and females completing those programs, vocational educators should ask themselves the following questions:

A. What is the source of the discouragement for the students in question?

B. What types of training programs are available that will help staff and/or students change their attitudes?

C. What types of support systems could we institute that will provide encouragement for students?

D. How can curriculum materials be screened or reworked in order to eliminate elements of sexism and provide role models?

E. How can the students in question have contact with actual role models in this job area? Can our staffing pattern be changed? Can students and same sex role models from the work area be put in touch with each other?

F. Are students encountering discouragement from sources outside the school that is having an impact on the students' willingness to stay in the program? For example, are work-study employers pretending to be willing to hire female students but, in practice, not providing the opportunities available to male students? If so, what can the school do to eliminate this problem and combat the discouragement?

CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSION

The goal of this Handbook has been to assist educators in implementing a program that provides equal opportunities for all students to pursue vocational training regardless of the student's sex. Because of historical sex segregation in both occupational opportunities and vocational education programs, the strategies developed have been designed to confront sex stereotyping on both personal and institutional levels. The eventual success of any strategy that seeks to eliminate sex bias in vocational education will depend largely on the faculty and staff of the institution. Their understanding of the problem, commitment to change, and willingness to struggle with educational approaches and administrative details that may appear on the surface to be inconsequential are essential to achieving the ultimate goal. Some form of staff and faculty training is necessary to developing shared responsibility and support for implementing a planned change strategy. Such training programs should be geared toward establishing a commitment to the goal of eliminating sex bias in vocational education and providing practical and specific resources that can be utilized by personnel.

Because of the increasing awareness of the problems created by sex bias in education and sex segregation in the workforce, many organizations have committed their resources to developing creative programs and resources that address various aspects of the issue. There are often many more resources available than one might suspect. Model programs, curriculum materials, technical assistance and volunteer time are available to most school districts. Vocational educators should investigate and utilize the resources available from the State staff, community groups, unions and employers.

The elimination of sex bias in vocational education, and eventually in the workforce, is a difficult task. However, vocational educators across the country have demonstrated that significant inroads can be made where individuals are willing to commit time, energy and leadership to this important task.